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PRACTICE NOTE

Exercise Conduct: Awards for Exercise Actors

PRACTICE

The exercise support team working for the State of Michigan and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security distributed inexpensive awards to volunteer actors in order to promote realistic role-playing during an exercise.

DESCRIPTION

The State of Michigan, Michigan State Police, Michigan Department of Community Health, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security conducted a full-scale exercise in June 2003 to test receipt and distribution of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS). The Michigan SNS Full-Scale Exercise simulated dispersal of a biological agent at a crowded collegiate sports venue. The exercise plan called for over 200 actors to depict symptoms related to exposure to the causative agent tularemia (*Francisella tularensis*).

Prior to the event, the exercise support team noted that unenthusiastic or overly exaggerated acting could undermine the realism of the exercise. The team also recognized that actors can increase the effectiveness of an exercise when they properly portray the symptoms and effects of their assigned illness.

In order to encourage realistic and enthusiastic role-playing, the exercise support team offered "Exercise Academy Awards" to individuals giving the most accurate performances. At the end of the exercise, the team distributed small, inexpensive items such as ribbons and water bottles to the actors who most accurately portrayed their assigned role. The exercise support team noted that the awards competition improved the quality of acting during the exercise.

CITATIONS

Morell, Brad. Senior Associate, Booz Allen Hamilton. Interview with *Lessons Learned Information Sharing*. 23 Aug 2006.

State of Michigan. *After-Action Report: Michigan Strategic National Stockpile Full-Scale Exercise*. 2-3 Jun 2003.

Von Kelsch, Abigail. Associate, Booz Allen Hamilton. Interview with *Lessons Learned Information Sharing*. 23 Aug 2006.

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